

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 10083 282243Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----114187 282301Z /61
O 282149Z OCT 77
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4507

S E C R E T BOGOTA 10083

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ASEC, CASC, PINS, CO
SUBJECT: STARR KIDNAPPING: CONTACT WITH MANCHOLA

1. PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR SORZANO MET WITH MANCHOLA EARLY THIS AFTERNOON (OCT 28, 1977). MANCHOLA SAID THAT FARC EXPECTED AN OFFICIAL COLOMBIAN REPLY (PRESUMABLE IN THE FORM OF A WRITTEN MESSAGE) TO THEIR OFFER TO EXCHANGE STARR FOR GUARACAS. SINCE THERE HAD NOT BEEN A FORMAL REPLY, FARC DECLINED TO SAY ANYTHING EITHER ON THE SUBJECT OF THE INTERMEDIARY OR ON THE ISSUES RAISED IN MRS. JENSEN'S LETTER. FARC INDICATED TO MANCHOLA, HOWEVER, THAT THEY INTENDED TO MAKE PUBLIC-VIA RADIO- THE DEMAND WHICH THEY HAD MADE OF THE COLOMBIAN GOVT.

2. ASKED ABOUT HIS INTERPRETATION OF FARC'S STANCE, MANCHOLA REPLIED THAT FARC HAD INDICATED TO HIM THAT THEY WERE NOT INTERESTED IN MONEY BUT WANTED THE RELEASE OF GUARACAS. SORZANO ASKED WHETHER MANCOLA HAD ANY IDEA OF FARC'S LIKELY RESPONSE TO AN OFFER FROM MRS. JENSEN TO PAY A RANSOM OF 10, 15, 20 THOUSAND DOLLARS. MANCHOLA REPLIED THAT ON THE BASIS OF HIS TALKS WITH FARC HE BELIEVED THAT IF FARC COULD NOT OBTAIN THE RELEASE OF GUARACAS THEN THEY WOULD PROBABLY ASK FOR "SOMETHING ELSE". HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT ELSE THEY MIGHT ASK FOR BUT HE DID NOT THINK THAT FARC WOULD KILL STARR IF THE COLOMBIANS REFUSED TO RELEASE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 10083 282243Z

GUARACAS. TO DO SO WOULD PREVENT THEM FROM OBTAINING SOMETHING IN RETURN FOR STARR'S RELEASE.

3. SORZANO ASKED MANCHOLA WHETHER FARC HAD SHOWN ANY REACTION TO THE INTERMEDIARY'S CONDITIONS FOR PLAYING HIS ROLE. MANCHOLA SAID THAT FARC WAS "DUBIOUS" ABOUT THE INTERMEDIARY AND THESE CONDITIONS. THEY WERE ESPECIALLY CON-

CERNED ABOUT THE NEED TO RESTRICT TO A BARE MINIMUM THE NUMBER OF PERSONS INVOLVED IN THE CASE. USE OF ADDITIONAL INTER-MEDIARY ADDED ONE MORE PERSON. SORZANO ASSURED MANCHOLA THAT EXSISTENCE AND IDENTITY OF INTERMEDIARY WAS BEING VERY CLOSELY HELD. AS FOR INTERMEDIARY'S CONDITIONS, SORZANO POINTED OUT THAT FARC SHOULD ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT IT WAS NOT PARTICULARLY EASY TO FIND PEOPLE WILLING TO SERVE AS INTER-MEDIARIES IN KIDNAPPING CASES. THE NUMBER OF CANDIDATES WAS FURTHER REDUCED BY THE FACT THAT MRS. JENSEN ALSO HAD TO BE ABLE TO TRUST THE PERSON IN QUESTION. THE AMERICAN CHOSEN MET THESE CRITERIA AND WHILE HE WOULD NOT HAVE THE FLEXIBILITY OF A NATIVE COLOMBIAN AS TO WHEN AND WHERE HE COULD BE SEEN, WE, NEVERTHELESS, WERE FULLY CONFIDENT THAT HE WOULD BE A GOOD INTERMEDIARY.

4. MANCHOLA THEN SAID THAT WITHIN THE NEXT TWO WEEKS HE WOULD MEET PERSONALLY WITH FARC'S LEADERSHIP. HE WAS WORRIED, HOWEVER, THAT THE COLOMBIAN ARMY MIGHT MOVE IN AND THUS PREVENT HIS CONTACT WITH FARC (SEE PARA EIGHT BELOW). SORZANO SUGGESTED THAT HE TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS WITH THEM THE FOLLOWING POINTS: 1) THE DESIRABILITY OF SHIFTING THE FOCUS OF THE DEMANDS AWAY FROM THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT AND TOWARDS MRS. JENSEN, WHO WAS MOST ANXIOUS TO RESCUE HER SON BY MEETING ANY REASONABLE MONETARY DEMAND. 2) TO EXPLAIN TO FARC THE CONSTRAINTS UNDER WHICH MRS. JENSEN'S SELECTION OF AN INTERMEDIARY HAD TO PROCEED AND TO CONVEY
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 10083 282243Z

TO THEM THAT BOTH MRS. JENSEN AND THE INTERMEDIARY WERE AS INTERESTED AS FARC IN KEEPING THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE INVOLVED DOWN TO THE BAREST MINIMUM. 3) TO ENCOURAGE FARC TO HELP FACILITATE THE DELIVERY OF THE BACKPACK FOR STARR WHICH WAS CURRENTLY BEING HELD BY THE RED CROSS IN NEIVA.

5. MANCHOLA AGREED TO RAISE ALL THREE ISSUES WITH FARC'S LEADERSHIP. HE ALSO SAID THAT HE PERSONALLY BELIEVED THAT THE BEST THING WAS TO SHIFT THE FOCUS OF DEMANDS TOWARDS MRS. JENSEN AND THAT HE WOULD TRY TO CONVINCE THEM ON THIS POINT.

6. SORZANO SUGGESTED ANOTHER MEETING ON OR AROUND NOV. 15 BUT MANCHOLA ASKED FOR MORE TIME AND THE DATE OF NOV. 25 WAS AGREED UPON. SOZANO THEN GAVE MANCHOLA 400 PESOS FOR HIS TRAVEL EXPENSES AND THE MEETING ENDED AFTER APPROXIMATELY ONE HOUR.

7. REQUEST EMBASSY BE AUTHORIZED INFORM FOREIGN MINISTRY OF FARC'S DESIRE FOR FORMAL, WRITTEN REPLY TO THEIR DEMAND FOR A PRISONER EXCHANGE AND ALSO TO ALERT MINISTRY TO LIKELIHOOD OF FARC'S PUBLICIZING THIS DEMAND.

8. WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY PLANS FOR STEPPED-UP ACTION BY THE COLOMBIAN ARMY IN AREA WHERE STARR IS BELIEVED TO BE HELD BUT WE WILL MAKE FURTHER, DISCREET INQUIRIES ABOUT THE ARMY'S INTENTIONS AND IF WARRANTED REQUEST WASHINGTON'S AUTHORIZATION TO CAUTION GOC AGAINST MILITARY MOVES WHICH COULD JEOPARDIZE OUR COMMON OBJECTIVE OF SAVING STARR'S LIFE.

DREXLER

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: KIDNAPPING, PRISONER EXCHANGE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 28-Oct-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BOGOTA10083
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770397-0830
Format: TEL
From: BOGOTA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19771012/aaaaajxs.tel
Line Count: 124
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 34b8c924-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13-Apr-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 761381
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: STARR KIDNAPPING: CONTACT WITH MANCHOLA
TAGS: ASEC, CASC, PINS, CO, FARC, (STARR, RICHARD), (GUARACAS, TARCISIO), (GUARACAS, JAIME)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/34b8c924-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009